REMARKS

With this Response, claims 1-13, 15, 18-21 are amended. No claims are added. No claims are cancelled. Therefore, claims 1-22 are pending.

<u>CLAIM REJECTIONS - 35 U.S.C. § 103</u>

Claims 1-13 and 18-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent Publication No. 2002/0124082 to Ramon J. San Andres et al. (hereinafter "San Andres") in view of US Patent No. 7,096,465 to Steven Dardinski et al. (hereinafter "Dardinski").

Applicant has amended claim 1 to more clearly recite the relationship between the hierarchical data object and the property sheet data structure. Specifically, amended claim 1 recites, in part:

> "a data object to store a hierarchical representation of configuration data associated with the server nodes" and
> "a property sheet data structure logically positioned at one of the nodes of the data object, the property sheet data structure includes a default configuration value and, optionally, a custom <u>configuration</u> value <u>to pair the default configuration value to the custom configuration value for a configuration parameter represented in the data object</u>"

Thus, there is <u>one</u> data object storing a hierarchical representation of <u>configuration</u> data associated with a <u>plurality</u> of server nodes. As taught by applicant in paragraph [0045], such a single hierarchical configuration data object facilitates management of the <u>configuration</u> data within clusters as depicted in Applicant's Figure 2.

In contrast, Applicant finds no hierarchical representation of <u>configuration</u> data associated with the server nodes in San Andres. Instead, San Andres discloses a "hierarchical directory structure representing a subset of the <u>content</u> (i.e., the on-line services and service-related entities) available to users of the network." (San Andres, paragraph [0006], emphasis added). Thus, San Andres merely provides a user with a hierarchical view of <u>content such the distribution of the content</u> among different servers is not apparent to the end user. However, the San Andres' hierarchical directory structure does not pertain to <u>configuration data</u> associated a plurality of server nodes. Applicant describes "configuration data" in paragraph [0029] to include such things as network information, indications of the kernel required by a server, binaries needed by boot process, cache size and memory allocation, etc. Thus, Applicant's

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hierarchical representation of <u>configuration</u> data is clearly distinguishable from San Andres' hierarchical representation of <u>content</u> data.

Furthermore, amended claim 1 recites a property sheet having a particular data structure and a particular relationship to the hierarchal configuration data object. As shown by Applicant in Figures 5 and 6 and described in paragraphs [0040]-[0042], the property sheet objects are logically positioned within the hierarchical configuration data object and contain configuration values. The property sheet data structure provides a means to retain <u>both a default and a custom configuration value</u> to enable the custom configuration values to be retained upon updates of the hierarchical configuration data object. As described by Applicant in paragraph [0044], both custom and a default configuration values are associated with a configuration parameter such that the default value can always be recovered.

In contrast, Applicant finds no mention in Andreas of retaining a default configuration value and, optionally, a custom configuration to pair those two values for a particular configuration parameter represented in the hierarchical data object.

Applicant respectfully submits the secondary art cited by the Examiner fail to cure these defects of San Andres. Specifically, Applicant fails to find a hierarchical representation of configuration data associated with the server nodes in Dardinski. Applicant further fails to identify in Dardinski a custom <u>configuration</u> value <u>to pair the default configuration value to the custom configuration value for a configuration parameter represented in the data object.</u> Dardinski merely discloses either an override or default value is used. Applicant is unable to find any teaching that both values are retained in a property sheet data structure to pair the two values.

Therefore, without conceding the propriety of the asserted combination, Applicant respectfully submits the combination of cited art fails to teach all of the elements recited in claim 1 and claim 1 is allowable. For at least these same reasons, Applicant submits claims 2-10, dependent on claim 1 are also allowable. On this basis, Applicant requests the Examiner to remove the 35 U.S.C. §103 rejections of claims 1-10.

Claim 11

Applicant has clarified the language of the claimed method to recite features similar to those recited in amended claim 1 and to more clearly recite the employ of the property sheet in the context of the hierarchical configuration data object. Specifically, the amended claim recites "updating the configuration data of one of the server nodes upon receiving a parameter update request" by "responsively entering, in the data object, the custom configuration value stored in the property sheet associated with the updated server node in place of a default configuration value" that would otherwise be entered upon an update. Thus, Applicant's claimed method employs the data structure of the property sheet to retain and identify custom configuration values within the hierarchical configuration data object. The amended language more clearly recites the same subject matter described in original claim 11.

In contrast, Applicant finds no such hierarchical configuration data object or property sheet in the cited art, as previously discussed regarding claim 1. Furthermore, Applicant finds no such updating of the configuration data using the custom configuration value provided in the property sheet object.

Therefore, without conceding the propriety of the asserted combination, Applicant respectfully submits the combination of cited art fails to teach all of the elements recited in claim 11 and claim 11 is allowable. For at least these same reasons, Applicant submits claims 12-14, dependent on claim 11 are also allowable. On this basis, Applicant requests the Examiner to remove the 35 U.S.C. §103 rejections of claims 11-14.

Claims 15 & 18

Applicant has amended claims 15 and 18 to recite features analogous to those recited in claims 11 and 1, respectively. Claim 15 further includes, "determining if the configuration data stored on the other server nodes is out-of-date based on the location of the updated configuration parameters within the hierarchy." This claimed feature finds unambiguous support in Applicant's paragraph [0045].

Therefore, for at least the reasons provided for claims 11 and 1, Applicant submits claims 15, 18 and their dependents are also allowable. On this basis, Applicant requests the Examiner to remove the 35 U.S.C. §103 rejections of claims 15-22.

Claims 2, 12 & 19

Claims 2, 12 and 19 have been amended to recite a specific embodiment taught in Applicant's paragraph [0036], where the hierarchical data object 500 contains a global settings object 510 pertaining to configuration data associated with all servers in the cluster and instance settings object 520 pertaining to server-specific configuration data.

<u>CONCLUSION</u>

Applicant respectfully requests examination of the above-identified application in view of the response.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that the rejections of the claims have been overcome herein, placing all pending claims in condition for allowance. Such action is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if such contact would further the examination of the above-identified application.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge or credit any deficiencies or overpayments in connection with this submission to Deposit Account No. 02-2666, and is requested to notify us of same.

Respectfully submitted,
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